

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
EASTERN DISTRICT OF WISCONSIN

Perry L., Emily M. and J.L.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

Case No. 22-cv-1244-bhl

MILWAUKEE MONTESSORI SCHOOL,

Defendants.

ORDER ON MOTION FOR REDACTION

On November 14, 2022, Plaintiffs Perry L. and Emily M. and their child J.L. filed a motion to redact their names. (ECF No. 9.) The Court granted the motion with respect to minor J.L., but held that his parents could only proceed anonymously if they filed a renewed motion identifying exceptional circumstances and explaining how enforcing the presumption against anonymity would result in harm. (ECF No. 11.)

The renewed motion arrived on December 20, 2022 and offer several reasons for redaction. (ECF Nos. 12 & 13.) First, in an affidavit, J.L.’s former therapist states that she recently treated J.L. for “anxiety, worried thoughts, low self-concept, sleep challenges, emotion regulation challenges, and symptoms of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder,” all connected to his experience at Milwaukee Montessori School. (ECF No. 12 at 3.) She fears that disclosing his parents’ identities would make him readily identifiable and could lead to “further, undue stress.” (*Id.*) Plaintiffs further assert that Perry L. and Emily M. are nationally recognized figures and linking them to J.L. would therefore be a straightforward endeavor. (ECF No. 13 at 2.) And the very basis of this lawsuit suggests the possibility of unwarranted reprisal. (ECF No. 10 at 7-10.)

The renewed motion supports allowing Perry L. and Emily M. to proceed anonymously. The Seventh Circuit has allowed adults to proceed anonymously under similar circumstances. *See Doe ex rel. Doe v. Elmbrook School Dist.*, 658 F.3d 710, 724 (7th Cir. 2011) (permitting adults to proceed anonymously because identification posed a risk of retaliatory mental harm to minors), *overruled on other grounds by Doe ex rel. Doe v. Elmbrook School Dist.*, 687 F.3d 840 (7th Cir. 2012). Here, the Court is convinced that Plaintiffs’ “interest in privacy, supported in the record,

outweighs the public's interest in totally transparent judicial proceedings.” *Id.* Plaintiffs’ motion will, therefore, be granted.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED that Perry L.’s and Emily M.’s Motion for Protective Order for Redaction, ECF No. 9, is **GRANTED**. All plaintiffs are entitled to litigate this case anonymously.

Dated at Milwaukee, Wisconsin on December 20, 2022.

s/ Brett H. Ludwig

BRETT H. LUDWIG

United States District Judge